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CARACAS FOR DAO AND LEGATT
PORT OF SPAIN FOR DEA AND LEGATT
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E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/07/2016
TAGS: [PINS](#) [PREL](#) [ASEC](#) [KCRM](#) [GY](#)
SUBJECT: RESPONDING TO GOG SECURITY ASSISTANCE REQUEST

REF: A. GEORGETOWN 406
[1](#)B. GEORGETOWN 372

Classified By: Ambassador Roland W. Bullen
For Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (U) Para 9 contains action request for WHA.

[1](#)2. (SBU) SUMMARY. The GoG requested security assistance from the U.S., UK and Canada in the wake of Agriculture Minister Satyadeow Sawh's assassination April 22 (refs A and B). The GoG's initial request was hasty and vague -- a knee-jerk reaction to a colleague's brutal killing. President Jagdeo raised the issue again in a May 22 meeting with Ambassador and defined the request more clearly. Post requests WHA guidance on response to GoG, bearing in mind Post's reservations spelled out in para 8. END SUMMARY

Initial GoG Request Unclear

[1](#)3. (U) The GoG requested security assistance from the U.S., UK and Canada in the wake of Minister Sawh's assassination April 22 (refs A and B). Head of the Presidential Secretariat Dr. Roger Luncheon wrote Ambassador April 24

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asking for help in:

-- "Expanding Investigations into the loss of the AK-47 weapons from the military and leading to the recovery."

-- "Enhancing the Criminal Investigation Department's investigation in to the execution of Minister S. Sawh and his family."

-- "Provision of Crime fighting equipment for an elite force."

[1](#)4. (SBU) The letter's vagueness dismayed Ambassador and the UK and Canada High Commissioners, who all transmitted the request to their respective capitals for consideration.

What the British and Canadians are Doing

15. (C) The British have brought the request to high-level attention at the FCO. Baroness Amos (the Guyanese-born Leader of the House of Lords) on her recent visit to the Caribbean mooted the idea of hosting a meeting between the ruling PPP/C and main opposition PNC/R parties. Security matters -- and the ongoing political stalemate in Guyana -- would be the principal agenda items for such a meeting. Jagdeo initially rebuffed the idea but has since reconsidered, putting the meeting back on the table. Despite this initiative, UK High Commission officials harbor the same reservations as Post concerning the GoG's assistance request -- see para 8. (Note: The UK has already devoted considerable resources to helping the Guyana Police Force (GPF) establish a tactical squad, but this effort has stalled over the GoG's reluctance to import the MP-5 weapons needed for the unit to become operational. The GoG tried to procure cheaper weapons instead -- a misadventure that resulted in a shipment of inferior firearms from a questionable source. End Note.)

16. (C) The Canadian High Commissioner is out of the country until June 12, but has reported to Ambassador that Canada will likely provide some support -- but limited to the investigation into the Sawh case. (Note: Sawh and two of his relatives also killed were Canadian citizens. End note.)

Jagdeo Reiterates, Clarifies Request for Assistance

17. (C) Ambassador and A/LEGATT met with President Jagdeo May 22 to discuss the results of FBI-administered polygraphy exams regarding the weapons theft from the Guyana Defence Force (GDF). Jagdeo used the occasion to reiterate the request for U.S. assistance in the investigation of Sawh's assassination, but he also provided more clarity. Jagdeo wants the U.S. to provide a security advisor to assist the investigation. Specifically, Jagdeo envisions a hands-on advisor who would stay in Guyana for "several months" working side-by-side with local law enforcement, guiding the investigative process.

Serious Reservations about Jagdeo's Request

18. (C) Post has a few serious reservations about Jagdeo's request. Providing a long-term security advisor will not lead to sustainable improvement in Guyana's administration of justice because:

-- First, the GDF and GPF were not consulted. This underscores how little Jagdeo and the GoG inner circle trust their own security forces. Post finds it difficult to see how any assistance plan can succeed without GDP/GPF buy-in.

-- Second, Jagdeo has made up his mind that the so-called Afro-Guyanese "armed resistance" is responsible for Sawh's killing and the missing AK-47s. He appears unwilling to countenance any another explanation, even in the face of convincing evidence. Why dedicate USG investigative resources if the GoG may not accept the conclusions?

-- Third, the U.S., UK and Canada have provided Guyana with extensive security/law enforcement training in recent years, with only modest results. The problem is two-fold: a lack of political will to tackle Guyana's criminal threats head-on, and a lack of resources and motivation in the police ranks.

How to Respond / Action Request

19. (SBU) Post requests Department's guidance/concurrence on reply to GoG. Post recommends responding with a letter that includes the following points:

-- The USG is already providing substantial assistance to the GoG on specific investigations and will continue to do so (i.e., FBI laboratory, gun-trace information, polygraphy exams).

-- The USG is unable to provide a long-term security advisor to Guyana at this time.

-- The GoG could retain an independent security expert to serve in an advisory role, and the USG could help identify such experts.

-- The USG understands the severity of Guyana's security challenge and encourages a broad-based, non-partisan strategy to tackle it. The USG stands ready to work with the GoG and its security and law enforcement agencies on capacity-building initiatives that strengthen the rule of law in Guyana.
Bullen